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*In the Claims*

The status of the claims is as follows:

1     1.     [Currently amended] A method for providing procurement  
2     services to a plurality of customer companies with complex  
3     accounting rules while providing secure information viewing  
4     in support of said customer companies, said customer  
5     companies being organized in a plurality of customer company  
6     groups and procurement coalitions for volume discounts and  
7     access to shared contracts with respect to a plurality of  
8     vendors, with procurement contracts leveraged across company  
9     groups, comprising the steps of:

10           providing a front end requisition and catalog server  
11           for providing a user interface to a user at a customer  
12           company browser to access catalogs and commodities  
13           managed by said enterprise and for providing approval  
14           notices and receiving approve/reject data with respect  
15           to customer approvers;

16           inputs to said front end requisition and catalog  
17           server from an enterprise procurement services  
18           system including requisition status, purchase  
19           order status and contracts, cost centers, currency  
20           exchange rates, general ledger accounts, purchase  
21           order history invoices, purchase order history  
22           receipts, and confirmations; outputs from said  
23           requisition and catalog server to said procurement  
24           services system including requisitions and  
25           positive confirmation responses;

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26 inputs to said front end requisition and catalog  
27 server from said customer company browser  
28 including submit requisition; outputs from said  
29 requisition and catalog server to said customer  
30 company browser including approval/rejection  
31 notices, status display, and negative and positive  
32 confirmations; with notice and response data being  
33 exchanged between said requisition and catalog  
34 server and browser;

35 inputs to said front end requisition and catalog  
36 server from a vendor system including vendor  
37 catalogs via an enterprise electronic data  
38 interchange application;

39 inputs to said front end requisition and catalog  
40 server from an enterprise requisition and catalog  
41 system including postal code validation data;

42 inputs to said front end requisition and catalog  
43 server including human resource extract data from  
44 an enterprise hub server;

45 providing said enterprise procurement services system  
46 managed by said enterprise for accepting requisitions  
47 from said front end requisition and catalog server  
48 entered by said user and responsive thereto for causing  
49 said electronic data interchange application to  
50 generate transactions to said vendors and for  
51 generating accounting transactions to a leveraged  
52 procurement network data warehouse facility for said  
53 requisitions;

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54 inputs to said enterprise procurement services  
55 system from said front end requisition and catalog  
56 server including requisitions and positive  
57 confirmation responses; and outputs to said front  
58 end requisition and catalog server from said  
59 enterprise procurement services system including  
60 requisition status data, purchase order status and  
61 contracts data, cost center data, currency  
62 exchange rates, general ledger accounts, purchase  
63 order history invoices, purchase order history  
64 receipts, and order confirmations;

65 inputs to said enterprise procurement services  
66 system from said enterprise hub server including  
67 cost center data; and outputs to said hub server  
68 from said enterprise procurement services system  
69 including a company process control table, vendor  
70 master updates, and accounting detail;

71 inputs to said enterprise procurement services  
72 system from said electronic data interchange  
73 application including purchase order  
74 acknowledgments, invoices, payment status and file  
75 transfer check reconstructions; and outputs from  
76 said enterprise procurement services system to  
77 said electronic data interchange application  
78 including purchase orders, invoice rejections and  
79 payments;

80 inputs to said enterprise procurement services  
81 system from operator terminals including process  
82 purchase orders, requests for quotes, and

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83 contracts data, create/change vendor master data,  
84 invoice processing; payment proposal data, and  
85 payment post and print;

86 inputs to said enterprise procurement services  
87 system including currency exchange rate data from  
88 an external financial services server; and output  
89 from said enterprise procurement services system  
90 to vendors including paper and fax purchase order  
91 documents;

92 inputs to said enterprise electronic data  
93 interchange application from said vendor including  
94 purchase acknowledgments and invoices, and outputs  
95 from said electronic data interchange application  
96 to said vendor including purchase orders and  
97 invoice rejections;

98 inputs to said enterprise electronic data  
99 interchange application including payments from a  
100 payment source and outputs from said enterprise  
101 electronic data interchange application including  
102 payments to customer electronic data interchange  
103 applications;

104 providing said leveraged procurement network hosted  
105 data warehouse facility for storing and monitoring said  
106 electronic data interchange transactions and accounting  
107 transactions;

108 providing said enterprise hub server for transferring  
109 data between said front end requisition and catalog

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110 server, said back-end purchasing system, and said data  
111 warehouse facility;

112 inputs to said enterprise procurement services hub  
113 server from said enterprise procurement services  
114 system including company process control table,  
115 vendor master updates and accounting detail;

116 outputs from said enterprise procurement services  
117 hub server including human resource extract data,  
118 extracted from customer employee data, to customer  
119 requisition and catalog system;

120 outputs from said enterprise procurement services  
121 hub server to a customer back-end purchasing  
122 system including vendor master data, invoice  
123 detail, payment detail and bank clearing detail  
124 data;

125 inputs to said enterprise procurement services hub  
126 server further including cost centers data;

127 said customer back-end purchasing system also  
128 receiving goods receipts from customer receiving;

129 establishing in a computer database a user profile for  
130 associating acceptable accounting and system controls  
131 to each person authorized by a customer company to  
132 access said procurement services;

133 associating each said company with a company group of  
134 related companies;

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135 providing common code defining workflow components  
136 common to all companies within said company group,  
137 including accounting validation and approval  
138 processing;

139 specifying in said user profile for each said user a  
140 user company and company group so as to define said  
141 controls based on company and company group by

142 collecting in said user profile each of a  
143 plurality of users into a user profile table  
144 associating acceptable accounting and system  
145 controls for each person authorized by a customer  
146 company to access procurement services for  
147 leveraging access and maintaining isolation of  
148 data by identifying a user at log on as associated  
149 with a particular company group;

150 providing in a hub server a company group human  
151 resources file connected through a fire wall to a  
152 requisition and catalog server for creating and  
153 maintaining said user profile table;

154 said procurement services including process  
155 requirements and data resources accessible only to  
156 those users identified in their profiles as  
157 members of a particular company and, therefore,  
158 company group and including catalogs, contracts,  
159 cost centers defining departments that can be  
160 charged, a chart of accounts defining general  
161 ledger account codes, entries in said user profile  
162 table, business rules and defaults including those

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163 affiliated with accounting and specifying fields  
164 that must be completed in creating a requisition  
165 and default data to be entered in those fields;

166 providing in each entry for a user in said user  
167 profile a company group code, a company code, a  
168 plant code specifying ship to location, an  
169 employee serial number, and an E-mail address;

170 using said company group code and said  
171 company code responsive to user login to  
172 associate said user with a given company in a  
173 company group for

174 responsive to user selection of a shop-  
175 from-a-catalog button on a user browser,  
176 controlling catalog application code to  
177 display to said user only those catalogs  
178 for which a corresponding catalog  
179 profile includes said user's company in  
180 said resource a resource profile;

181 specifying departments that can be  
182 charged across companies in a company  
183 group;

184 selectively allowing a user to initiate  
185 requests for other users, view general  
186 ledger account codes associated with  
187 commodity codes by company group,  
188 company group specific business rules  
189 including accounting business rule

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190 defaults specifying fields required to  
191 be filled in by said user based on item  
192 being bought;

193 said resource profile providing for each procurement  
194 resource to be shared among said users ~~a resource~~  
195 ~~profile in~~ a computer database specifying for each  
196 resource those said companies to have access to and  
197 share said procurement resource; and

198 responsive to said user profile and said resource  
199 profiles, controlling user access to said procurement  
200 resources.

2-11. [Canceled]

1 12. [Currently amended] System for providing procurement  
2 services by an enterprise to a plurality of customer  
3 companies with complex accounting rules while providing  
4 secure information viewing in support of said customer  
5 companies, said customer companies being organized in a  
6 plurality of customer company groups and procurement  
7 coalitions for volume discounts and access to shared  
8 contracts with respect to a plurality of vendors, with  
9 procurement contracts leveraged across company groups,  
10 comprising:

11 a front end requisition and catalog server for  
12 providing a user interface to a user at a customer  
13 company browser to access catalogs and commodities  
14 managed by said enterprise and for providing approval

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15 notices and receiving approve/reject data with respect  
16 to customer approvers;

17 inputs to said front end requisition and catalog  
18 server from an enterprise procurement services  
19 system including requisition status, purchase  
20 order status and contracts, cost centers, currency  
21 exchange rates, general ledger accounts, purchase  
22 order history invoices, purchase order history  
23 receipts, and confirmations; outputs from said  
24 requisition and catalog server to said procurement  
25 services system including requisitions and  
26 positive confirmation responses;

27 inputs to said front end requisition and catalog  
28 server from said customer company browser  
29 including submit requisition; outputs from said  
30 requisition and catalog server to said customer  
31 company browser including approval/rejection  
32 notices, status display, and negative and positive  
33 confirmations; with notice and response data being  
34 exchanged between said requisition and catalog  
35 server and browser;

36 inputs to said front end requisition and catalog  
37 server from a vendor system including vendor  
38 catalogs via an enterprise electronic data  
39 interchange application;

40 inputs to said front end requisition and catalog  
41 server from an enterprise requisition and catalog  
42 system including postal code validation data;

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43 inputs to said front end requisition and catalog  
44 server including human resource extract data from  
45 an enterprise hub server;

46 said enterprise procurement services system managed by  
47 said enterprise for accepting requisitions from said  
48 front end requisition and catalog server entered by  
49 said user and responsive thereto for causing said  
50 electronic data interchange application to generate  
51 transactions to said vendors and for generating  
52 accounting transactions to a leveraged procurement  
53 network data warehouse facility for said requisitions;

54 inputs to said enterprise procurement services  
55 system from said front end requisition and catalog  
56 server including requisitions and positive  
57 confirmation responses; and outputs to said front  
58 end requisition and catalog server from said  
59 enterprise procurement services system including  
60 requisition status data, purchase order status and  
61 contracts data, cost center data, currency  
62 exchange rates, general ledger accounts, purchase  
63 order history invoices, purchase order history  
64 receipts, and order confirmations;

65 inputs to said enterprise procurement services  
66 system from said enterprise hub server including  
67 cost center data; and outputs to said hub server  
68 from said enterprise procurement services system  
69 including a company process control table, vendor  
70 master updates, and accounting detail;

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71 inputs to said enterprise procurement services  
72 system from said electronic data interchange  
73 application including purchase order  
74 acknowledgments, invoices, payment status and file  
75 transfer check reconstructions; and outputs from  
76 said enterprise procurement services system to  
77 said electronic data interchange application  
78 including purchase orders, invoice rejections and  
79 payments;

80 inputs to said enterprise procurement services  
81 system from operator terminals including process  
82 purchase orders, requests for quotes, and  
83 contracts data, create/change vendor master data,  
84 invoice processing, payment proposal data, and  
85 payment post and print;

86 inputs to said enterprise procurement services  
87 system including currency exchange rate data from  
88 an external financial services server; and output  
89 from said enterprise procurement services system  
90 to vendors including paper and fax purchase order  
91 documents;

92 inputs to said enterprise electronic data  
93 interchange application from said vendor including  
94 purchase acknowledgments and invoices, and outputs  
95 from said electronic data interchange application  
96 to said vendor including purchase orders and  
97 invoice rejections;

98 inputs to said enterprise electronic data

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99 interchange application including payments from a  
100 payment source and outputs from said enterprise  
101 electronic data interchange application including  
102 payments to customer electronic data interchange  
103 applications;

104 said leveraged procurement network hosted data  
105 warehouse facility for storing and monitoring said  
106 electronic data interchange transactions and accounting  
107 transactions;

108 said enterprise hub server for transferring data  
109 between said front end requisition and catalog server,  
110 said back-end purchasing system, and said data  
111 warehouse facility;

112 inputs to said enterprise procurement services hub  
113 server from said enterprise procurement services  
114 system including company process control table,  
115 vendor master updates and accounting detail;

116 outputs from said enterprise procurement services  
117 hub server including human resource extract data,  
118 extracted from customer employee data, to customer  
119 requisition and catalog system;

120 outputs from said enterprise procurement services  
121 hub server to a customer back-end purchasing  
122 system including vendor master data, invoice  
123 detail, payment detail and bank clearing detail  
124 data;

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125 inputs to said enterprise procurement services hub  
126 server further including cost centers data;

127 said customer back-end purchasing system also  
128 receiving goods receipts from customer receiving;

129 said requisition and catalog server including a user  
130 profile table, a company group human resources file, a  
131 new employee profile build application, a table build  
132 application and a plurality of procurement resources;

133 said user profile table associating acceptable  
134 accounting and system controls for each person  
135 authorized by a customer company to access said  
136 procurement services for leveraging access and  
137 maintaining isolation of data by identifying a  
138 user at log on as associated with a particular  
139 company group;

140 said hub server including a company group human  
141 resources file connected through a fire wall to  
142 said requisition and catalog server for creating  
143 and maintaining said user profile table;

144 said procurement resources including process  
145 requirements and data resources accessible only to  
146 those users identified in their profiles as  
147 members of a particular company and, therefore,  
148 company group and including catalogs, contracts,  
149 cost centers defining departments that can be  
150 charged, a chart of accounts defining general  
151 ledger account codes, entries in said user profile

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152 table, business rules and defaults including those  
153 affiliated with accounting and specifying fields  
154 that must be completed in creating a requisition  
155 and default data to be entered in those fields;

156 each entry for a user in said user profile  
157 including company group code, company code, plant  
158 code specifying ship to location, employee serial  
159 number, and E-mail address;

160 said company group code and said company code  
161 being operable responsive to user login to  
162 associate said user with a given company in a  
163 company group, thereby

164 responsive to user selection of a shop-  
165 from-a-catalog button on a user browser  
166 controlling catalog application code to  
167 display to said user only those catalogs  
168 for which a corresponding catalog  
169 profile includes said user's company in  
170 said in a resource profile;

171 specifying departments that can be  
172 charged across companies in a company  
173 group;

174 selectively allowing a user to initiate  
175 requests for other users, view general  
176 ledger account codes associated with  
177 commodity codes by company group,  
178 company group specific business rules

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179 including accounting business rule  
180 defaults specifying fields required to  
181 be filled in by said user based on item  
182 being bought;

183 each said company associated with a company group of  
184 related companies;

185 common code defining workflow components common to all  
186 companies within said company group, including  
187 accounting validation and approval processing;

188 said user profile specifying for each said user a user  
189 company and company group so as to define said controls  
190 based on company and company group;

191 a resource profile provided for each said procurement  
192 resource, each entry in said resource profile including  
193 a resource identifier and specifying companies to have  
194 access to and share said procurement resource; and

195 said user profile and said resource profiles for  
196 controlling user access to said procurement resources.

13-26. [Canceled]

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